COLLECTORS' CORNER NO. 76 MARCH 26, 1976
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AMERICA'S FASTEST GROWING HOBBY

ANNCR: AND NOW, COLLECTORS' CORNER...THE VOICE OF AMERICA SERIES OF PROGRAMS FOR LISTENERS WHO COLLECT THINGS -- WHETHER THEY BE STAMPS OR COINS, SNUFF BOTTLES OR OLD AUTOS, OR MERELY BALLS OF STRING. HERE IS--------WITH THE STORY OF A GROUP OF COLLECTORS WHO CLAIM THEIR IS THE FASTEST GROWING HOBBY IN THE COUNTRY.

NARR: WHAT THEY COLLECT IS CANS...BUT ONLY A SPECIAL KIND OF CANS. THERE ARE AN ESTIMATED HALF A MILLION OF THESE COLLECTORS TODAY, COMPARED TO ONLY A HANDFUL SIX YEARS AGO. THEY ARE SO ACTIVE THEY HAVE FORMED THEIR OWN ORGANIZATION...THE B-C-A-A OR BEER CAN COLLECTORS OF AMERICA. THE HEADQUARTERS IS IN SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI NOT FAR FROM ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S BEST-KNOWN BREWERIES. A SPOKESMAN FOR B-C-A-A INSISTS THAT MOST OF THE MEMBERS COLLECT FOR FUN, NOT PROFIT. OLD CANS OR NEW, BOTH ARE SEIZED UPON BY THE COLLECTOR IF THEY ARE FOR ANY REASON UNUSUAL. AND IT'S STRICTLY THE CAN THAT INTERESTS THE HOBBYIST AND NOT THE LIQUID CONTENTS.

WHAT'S AN OLD BEER CAN WORTH? TWO HUNDRED DOLLARS IF IT HAPPENS TO BE A CAN OF 007 (DOUBLE-OH SEVEN) BEER. THAT'S A BRAND PRODUCED A FEW YEARS AGO BY A SMALL BREWER IN ARIZONA WHO HOPED TO CASH IN ON (MAKE MONEY FROM) THE FAD OF THE MOMENT...JAMES BOND MYSTERY MOVIES. NOBODY LIKED 007 BEER AND THE BREWER SOON STOPPED MAKING IT. THE BEER WENT NOWHERE, BUT AS COLLECTOR'S ITEMS THE CANS WENT TO ABOUT TWO HUNDRED DOLLARS EACH.

NARR: (CONT'D) EVEN A BRAND NEW BEER CAN CAN BECOME A COLLECTORS' ITEM. TAKE THE AMANA BEER PRODUCED EARLY THIS YEAR BY A SMALL BREWER IN SOUTHERN MINNESOTA. HE THOUGHT HE COULD SCORE SALES AMONG THE BEER LOVERS IN THE NEARBY AMANA RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES OF IOWA. BUT AMANA BEER WAS ON THE SHELVES FOR ONLY ONE WEEK. THE AMANA COMMUNITIES HAD NOTHING AGAINST THE BEER BUT THEY RESENTED THE BREWERS USE OF THE NAME. SO THEY WENT TO COURT AND GOT AN INJUNCTION AGAINST AMANA BEER. THE RESULT: AN INSTANT COLLECTORS ITEM.

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ONE COLLECTOR FROM SAINT LOUIS FLEW TO IOWA AND BOUGHT TWO HUNDRED FIFTY CASES OF THAT RARE AMANA BEER FOR TEN DOLLARS A CASE. HE HAS ALREADY RESOLD TWO HUNDRED CASES AT AN AVERAGE PRICE OF FIFTY-FIVE DOLLARS TO REALIZE A PROFIT OF NINE THOUSAND DOLLARS. /

EDITOR: THERE IS EVEN A GROWING BODY OF LITERATURE FOR THE BEER CAN COLLECTOR. A CHICAGO PUBLISHER IS COMING OUT SOON WITH TWO NEW VOLUMES, ONE OF THEM A FULL-COLOR GUIDE SHOWING THREE THOUSAND FOUR HUNDRED DIFFERENT BEER CANS. IT WILL COST THE COLLECTOR TWENTY DOLLARS. THERE'S A CHICAGO INSURANCE EXECUTIVE WHO SPECIALIZES IN HIS COLLECTING. HE TAKES ONLY THE CANS WITH A TOP SHAPED LIKE A CONE. HE HAS MORE THAN SIX HUNDRED OF THEM AND SAYS THE VALUE OF HIS COLLECTION HAS TRIPLED IN JUST THREE YEARS TO TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS. /HE SAYS HE LOOKS ON IT

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AS A FORM OF INVESTMENT. HE LIKES IT BECAUSE IT GIVES HIM SOMETHING TO DO WHEN HE'S NOT SELLING INSURANCE...AND HE SAYS, FRANKLY, HE ENJOYS THE COLLECTOR'S CHASE AND THE DEALING. /

EDITOR: (CONT'D) MOST BEER CAN COLLECTORS GET THEIR PRIZES MAKING TRADES WITH OTHER COLLECTORS. SOME GO RIGHT TO THE SOURCE AND GATHER CANS FROM THE CITY DUMPS OR FROM CONDEMNED BUILDINGS OR LONG OUT-OF-BUSINESS BREWERIES. BREWERS, OF COURSE, KNOW ABOUT THE CAN-COLLECTING CRAZE. SO THEY ARE CONSTANTLY CHANGING TO NEW BRAND NAMES. ONE BREWER IN PHILADELPHIA IS EVEN SELLING WHAT HE CALLS A "LIMITED EDITION" OF A SPECIAL BICENTENNIAL BEER CAN.

ANNCR: THIS HAS BEEN COLLECTORS CORNER...NOTES ON THE WORLD OF COLLECTORS WHO BUY AND SELL AND, ABOVE ALL, TREASURE THINGS FROM STAMPS TO STRING TO RARE BEER CANS. NEXT WEEK (AT THIS TIME) ANOTHER LOOK INTO THE COLLECTORS' CORNER. THIS IS----------.

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